

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1914
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Administration
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Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

In a recent memo to state officials, the Department of Public Safety of the State of Texas (DPS) stated, "Public officials in Texas may face a variety of threats. These threats can take the form of non-violent crimes such as vandalism, harassment, hacking, and stalking; or violent crimes such as kidnapping, assault, or even assassination. The motives associated with these threats are varied, including financial gain, radical ideology, revenge, or a psychological disorder. Some public officials are targeted for specific reasons, while others are targeted as symbols of the government. In some cases, the families or staff members of officials may also be affected by these threats."

One of the safety recommendations of DPS is for state officials to keep a low profile and not call attention to themselves.

The intent of the legislation is to better protect the personal safety of state officials. S.B. 1914 eliminates the words "State Official" from license plates issued to state officials, which can make state officials and their families a target of threat.

S.B. 1914 provides the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles the flexibility to design a new license plate for state officials that still allows law enforcement to identify the driver of a vehicle as a state official during times of emergency, but in a manner that is not evident to the public.

S.B. 1914 amends current law relating to certain specialty license plates.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 504.401(a), Transportation Code, to require the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) to issue specialty license plates to a state official, rather than to issue specialty license plates that include the words "State Official" to a state official.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 504.603, Transportation Code, as follows:

Sec. 504.603. TEXAS CAPITOL LICENSE PLATES. (a) Requires TxDMV to design and issue specialty license plates relating to the State Capitol, rather than to issue specialty license plates depicting the State Capitol. Authorizes TxDMV to design the license plates in consultation with the State Preservation Board.

(b) Requires that the remainder of the fee for issuance of the license plates, after deduction of TxDMV's administrative costs, be deposited to the credit of the Capitol fund, rather than the credit of the general revenue fund, established under Section 443.0101 (Capitol Fund), Government Code.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2013.